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## INSIDE NEWS OF CONGRESS - - - -

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### FISCAL FACTS:

In the coming weeks there will be much ado about the Federal budget, spending and taxes. Fiscal policy is certain to be a major issue in the campaign. So many statistics will be used that it will sometimes be difficult for the average voter to make a sound evaluation. It will not be unusual to find "big spenders" — those who are for each and every popular spending program — contending that they are for "economy." And no doubt they will present statistics of some kind purporting to prove it.

Here is an example of how statistics can be so presented as to mislead the unwary. It was called to our attention by Congressman Frank T. Bow (R), of Ohio, a leading economy advocate, on the Appropriations Committee.

The New York Times recently headlined a story to read: "President Johnson Reports a Cut of \$3.6 billion in Deficit." This obviously gives one the impression that the President has achieved some real economy in government. Such is not the case. The facts as presented by the headline are correct. But they are so presented in this way as to mislead the average reader.

"A cut of \$3.6 billion in deficit?" What deficit? Nothing more or less than the hypothetical deficit anticipated in the original budget estimates. In our view there is nothing at all remarkable about having a smaller debt at the end of a year than anticipated at the beginning of the year, particularly when the year-end debt is still \$2 billion greater than that the year before.

Not only is the deficit at the end of fiscal 1964 greater than that of June 30, 1963. The actual government spending in fiscal 1964 is \$5 billion greater than in 1963. Nor can it hardly be said, although it will be, that the Administration has been following an economy program when our national debt as of June 30, 1964, is \$312.1 billion, or an increase of \$6 billion over fiscal 1963.

These are the hard, cold facts. Much ado may be made about turning the lights off at the White House and reducing the Federal payroll a few thousand. To us, and we think to most people, it is all nothing more or less than a political pretense of economy when the fact is the government spent \$5 billion more this year than last and has initiated programs which will still further increase the spending.

To boast about achieving a smaller deficit than anticipated is tantamount to claiming to be an economizer if you spend less than you originally planned to spend. In our view a true economizer is one who doesn't plan a year-end deficit in the first place. One of the reasons the 1964 deficit is less than anticipated is that Congress delayed the enactment of the tax reduction bill.

### VIETNAM CRISIS:

We have long taken the position that a major weakness in our foreign policy has been lack of firmness. When the late President Kennedy called the Congressional Leaders to the White House preliminary to the Cuban "quarantine" we made it clear that such action would have our wholehearted support. When President Johnson called us to the White House we likewise expressed our approval of a military response to the unprovoked attack on our ships in international waters. Early the next morning we attended the conference at the State Department on the wording of the resolution by which the Congress officially endorsed the President's action.

In addition to these White House and State Department sessions, we attended our "off the Record" Armed Services Subcommittee session with top CIA officials and likewise discussed the Vietnam situation privately with some of our military leaders. In none of these conferences was any one certain as to why such an unprovoked attack was made. Many believe it was a "test" of our "will." We are constrained to say that a lack of firmness in every aspect of our foreign policy invites aggressive acts.